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Controlling Smooth Groundcherry and Clammy Groundcherry

Michigan State University Extension Service

IPM Facts

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Issued December 1992

2 pages

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What is a Perennial Weed?

A perennial weed is any weed capable of surviving for three or more years. Perennial weeds are characterized by vegetative reproduction. Vegetative reproduction in these species is due to (a) rhizomes - underground creeping stems commonly found in perennial grasses; (b) stolons - prostrate stems or runners on the soil surface with roots at the nodes; (c) creeping roots; (d) tubers - underground enlarged storage stems; or (e) bulbs - underground storage organs consisting of a stem axis covered with many overlapping leaf scales.

Perennial weeds may or may not reproduce by seed. They always, however, have the potential to reproduce by vegetative means.

Description of Smooth Groundcherry and Clammy Groundcherry

Smooth groundcherry and clammy groundcherry are closely related species. Some characteristics are common to both species: Stems are 1 to 3 feet tall and erect. Leaves are 2 to 3 inches long and slightly round-toothed. Flowers are bell-shaped, yellow to yellow-green with purple to brown centers, and are about 3/4 inch in diameter. A round berry is produced that is enclosed with a papery covering resembling a Chinese lantern. The berry of smooth groundcherry is red to purple, while clammy

groundcherry berries are yellow. Berries contain numerous small, yellow, flattened, oval seeds. Clammy groundcherry can be distinguished by its hairy stems and leaves, while smooth groundcherry is smooth to sparsely hairy. Clammy groundcherry stems are more branched, thus the plant appears bush-like. Both species reproduce by seeds and rootstocks.

Methods of Control

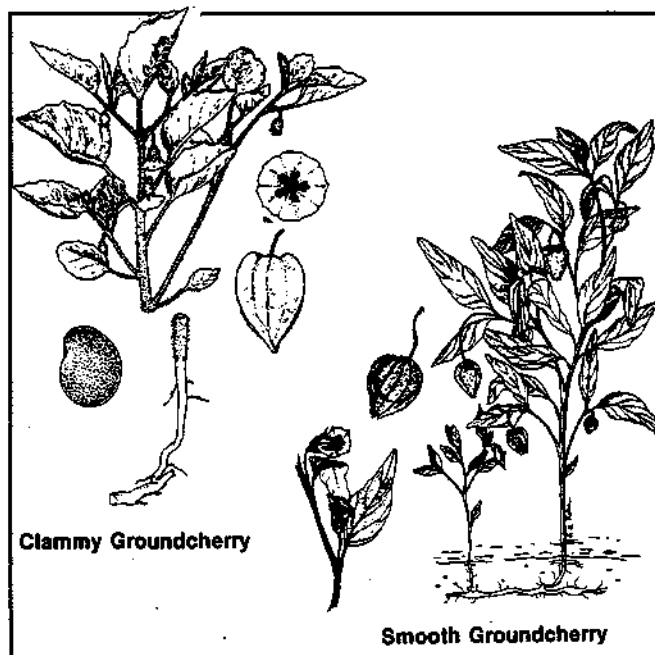
Methods of perennial weed control fall into three categories: (a) cultural, such as crop rotation; (b) mechanical, tillage including various implements such as plows, disks, or cultivators; and (c) chemical, using herbicides. Control of perennial weeds may

require a combination of all these methods. Consider the energy and environmental implications when choosing a method of control.

Mechanical Control

Mechanical control may increase or decrease perennial weed infestations. Tillage may increase infestations by moving perennial weeds to new areas of the field or breaking dormancy of underground buds resulting in new shoot growth. Tillage during cool, wet conditions results in reduced control.

Tillage may decrease perennial weed infestations if done frequently enough to deplete underground root reserves. The field should be tilled every two or three weeks. Warm, dry soil conditions increase the effectiveness of tillage for perennial weed control by drying plant roots on the soil surface.



Chemical Control of Smooth and Clammy Groundcherry

Soybeans

<u>Herbicide</u> ¹	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Timing</u> <u>(Weed height)</u>	<u>Effectiveness</u>
Blazer + NIS ²	1.5 pt/A + 1/4%	POST (2-4")	Poor
Cobra + COC ²	0.78 pt/A + 1 pt/A	POST (2-4")	Poor

¹ These treatments only suppress top growth.

² NIS = nonionic surfactant; COC = crop oil concentrate

Corn

<u>Herbicide</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Timing</u> <u>(Weed height)</u>	<u>Effectiveness</u>
Banvel	1/2 pt/A	8"	Fair-Good
Banvel + 2,4-D amine	1/4 pt/A + 1/2 pt/A	8"	Fair-Good
2,4-D amine	1 pt/A	8"	Fair-Good

Spot treatments and between crops

<u>Herbicide</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Timing</u> <u>(Weed growth stage)</u>	<u>Effectiveness</u>
Roundup ¹	2%	Spot treatment	Good
		(late bud to flower)	
Roundup ¹	3 qt/A	Spot treatment	Good
		(late bud to flower)	
Banvel	1-2 qt/A ²	Spot treatment	Good
		(late bud to flower)	
2,4-D	2 qt/A	Spot treatment	Good
		(late bud to flower)	

¹ Roundup is not labeled for control of clammy or smooth groundcherry.

² Banvel at 1 qt/A will provide suppression; 2 qt/A will provide control.

This bulletin was originally prepared with the support of the U.S. Department of Energy, Grant No. DE-FG0276CS60204. However, any opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of DOE.

To protect yourself and others and the environment, always read the label before applying any pesticide.

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